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Chair: Mr. Hilale ..... (Morocco)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 28: Social development**  
(A/C.3/70/L.15/Rev.1)

*Action on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.15/Rev.1:  
Integrating volunteerism into peace and development:  
the plan of action for the next decade and beyond*

1. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Salto** (Japan), speaking also on behalf of Brazil, said that volunteering could be understood as an effective tool of social engagement and participation for all people – at the local, national, regional and global levels.

3. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, the Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Uruguay had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

4. **Mr. Amoudokpo** (Togo) said that youth employment was a significant concern for the Togolese public authorities. Employment was not only a means of subsistence, but was essential for psychological balance and participation in social life. The Togolese Government had established a youth employment programme in 2011 that would provide 200,000 jobs to young people over a five-year period. One of the programme's components was a national volunteerism initiative that provided skills-building opportunities for unemployed young graduates. It was managed by the Ministry of Development, with support from the

United Nations Development Programme, while promotional and management activities were carried out through regional volunteerism centres in the five economic regions. The initiative was part of the poverty reduction strategy and had provided training for over 6,000 young volunteers.

5. In the future, the initiative would be open both to young people from 18 to 35 years of age with no previous training and to senior citizens with relevant experience who could facilitate the sharing of experiences and skills. He expressed appreciation to the countries and institutions that had provided assistance to transform the initiative into a national volunteerism agency.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.15/Rev.1 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 71: Right of peoples to self-determination** (A/C.3/70/L.60)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.60: Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination*

7. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

8. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that Belize, El Salvador, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Paraguay, Senegal, Seychelles, Swaziland, Rwanda and Tajikistan had joined the sponsors, bringing the total number of sponsors to 76. The right to self-determination was a central principle of the Charter of the United Nations and of common article 1 of the two international human rights covenants. It was a basic and inalienable human right that was an essential prerequisite for the full realization of other fundamental human rights, as affirmed at all major summits of the United Nations and in the declarations and resolutions of other international bodies. The General Assembly's consistent support for previous draft resolutions on that important subject had reaffirmed the continued relevance of the right to self-determination and sent a strong message of support to all peoples suffering occupation and oppression.

9. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Honduras, Lesotho, Mauritius and the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

10. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.60 was adopted.*

11. **Ms. Brooke** (United States of America) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft

resolution in view of the importance of the subject. However, the resolution contained many misstatements of international law and was inconsistent with current State practice.

12. **Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) said that his Government fully supported the right to self-determination of peoples that were still subject to colonial domination or foreign occupation. However, that right should be interpreted in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2625 (XXV) and other relevant United Nations resolutions. The exercise of the right to self-determination presupposed an active subject in the form of a people subjected to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation, in accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 1514 (XV). Without such a subject, there was no right to self-determination. The draft resolution just adopted should be interpreted and implemented in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on decolonization.

13. **Ms. Ortega** (Spain) said that, while his Government fully supported the right to self-determination, there were situations in which the administering Power and the authorities of a colonized territory had established a political relationship in their own interest and denied any colonial link, while still claiming a so-called right to self-determination. That was a distortion of the Charter of the United Nations and of the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the conventions mentioned in the draft resolution.

14. The original population of Gibraltar had been forced to leave the territory, whereas the current inhabitants were descendants of those installed by the occupying Power for military purposes. In such circumstances, Spain denied the existence of a right to self-determination protected under international law. The United Nations doctrine on the decolonization of Non-Self-Governing territories firmly established the protection of the rights of the indigenous inhabitants vis-à-vis the interests of the colonizers. The United Nations considered that the situation in Gibraltar compromised the territorial integrity of Spain, and for decades Spain had been calling for dialogue on the issue. Spain believed that a solution that respected the interests of Gibraltar's inhabitants could be found, and hoped that the United Kingdom would join the effort to seek a solution, in accordance with the mandate

provided by the General Assembly and the commitment made to Spain in the 1984 Brussels Agreement.

15. **Ms. Bell** (United Kingdom), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Government of the United Kingdom reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to the people of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom would not enter into any arrangement under which sovereignty over Gibraltar would be transferred to another State against the wishes of the people of Gibraltar and it would not enter into sovereignty negotiations that they opposed.

#### **Agenda Item 72: Promotion and protection of human rights**

##### **(a) Implementation of human rights instruments**

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.25/Rev.1; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto*

16. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

17. **Ms. Sage** (New Zealand) said that, as the ten-year anniversary of the adoption of the Convention was approaching in 2016, it was important to send a clear message that States remained committed to the rights of persons with disabilities. The Convention was a tool for both human rights and development. In 2017, Member States would move away from the current text, which was largely procedural in nature, towards something more substantive. The first such text would address issues affecting women and girls, who were subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and it would be informed by the report requested in the current draft resolution. Her delegation looked forward to continuing the efforts with Member States and persons with disabilities to shift the focus from disabilities and highlight their abilities.

18. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Andorra, Bangladesh, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Morocco,

Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors.

19. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.25/Rev.1 was adopted.*

20. **Mr. Joshi** (India) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution. The international community had adopted the Convention in order to ensure the protection and promotion of universal human rights and dignity for persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development. An estimated one billion persons in the world were disabled and 20 percent of them were among the poorest in the world. That large group could be making a significant contribution to sustainable development, but that could only happen if poverty eradication and disability mainstreaming were at the core of sustainable development strategies.

21. For India, the challenges faced in the empowerment and realization of rights of persons with disabilities related to development as much as to human rights. The right to development offered a practical approach for the progressive realization of all human rights, including civil and political, social, economic and cultural rights. In future, Member States should endorse a comprehensive and holistic approach, mainstreaming the disability issue and emphasizing the right to development in sustainable development strategies.

#### **Agenda item 72: Promotion and protection of human rights (continued)**

- (b) **Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (continued)** (A/C.3/70/L.23/Rev.1, A/C.3/70/L.32, A/C.3/70/L.33, A/C.3/70/L.38, A/C.3/70/L.40/Rev.1 and A/C.3/70/L.41/Rev.1)

#### *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.23/Rev.1: Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism*

22. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

23. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiola** (Mexico) said that the current version of the draft resolution included a reference to the importance of civil society and ensuring that counter-terrorism laws and measures fully respected the rights of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. States were also urged to ensure that gender equality and non-discrimination were taken into account when shaping, reviewing and implementing all counter-terrorism measures and to recognize the key role played by humanitarian organizations in areas where terrorist groups were active.

24. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors.

25. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.23/Rev.1 was adopted.*

26. **Mr. Essam** (Egypt) said that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be guaranteed at all times and in all circumstances and that counter-terrorism measures must fully comply with international human rights law. However, the draft resolution failed to give due consideration to the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms; it was not only the rights of terrorists that should be taken into account but also those of the victims of terrorist attacks and threats. It was regrettable that his delegation's attempts to amend the resolution to reflect those concerns had gone unheeded. For that reason,

Egypt had not joined the sponsors, despite having sponsored similar resolutions in the past.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.32: Human rights and unilateral coercive measures*

27. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

28. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that China, Kyrgyzstan and South Sudan had joined the sponsors.

29. **The Chair** said that a recorded vote had been requested on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.32.

30. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.32.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay,

Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Palau

31. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.32 was adopted by 126 votes to 53, with 1 abstention.*

32. **Ms. Brooke** (United States) said that her delegation had voted against the draft resolution because it had no basis in international law and did not serve to advance the cause of human rights. States bore the responsibility to protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of their citizens. The text of the draft resolution challenged the sovereign right of States to conduct their economic relations freely and to protect legitimate national interests, including by taking actions in response to national security concerns. The draft resolution also attempted to undermine the ability of the international community to respond to acts that were offensive to international norms. Unilateral and multilateral sanctions were a legitimate means to achieve foreign policy, security, and other national and international objectives. The United States was not alone in that view or practice.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.33: Promotion of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the human rights treaty bodies*

33. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

34. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Russian Federation had joined the sponsors.

35. **The Chair** said that the delegation of Luxembourg had requested a recorded vote on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.33.

36. **Mr. Reisen** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States in explanation of the vote before the voting, said that while the European Union recognized the importance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the composition of human rights treaty bodies was already prescribed in the provisions of the respective human rights treaties, some of which already recommended that consideration should be given to equitable geographical distribution. The General Assembly should not attempt to modify those provisions or ask States Parties to do so. The European Union opposed the idea of using a quota system to elect members of treaty bodies; experts were elected based on personal merit, not as representatives of States or regional groups. Furthermore, the draft resolution failed to reiterate that the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies was essential for the performance of their duties, in line with resolution 68/268. For those reasons, the European Union member States would vote against the draft resolution.

37. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.33.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius,

Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Costa Rica

38. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.33 was adopted by 124 votes to 54, with 1 abstention.*

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.38: Human rights and cultural diversity*

39. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

40. **Mr. Maes** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Union in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation had requested a recorded vote on behalf of those States. The European Union attached great importance to the promotion of cultural diversity, which implied a commitment to human rights and

fundamental freedoms. According to relevant United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) instruments and declarations, cultural diversity could be promoted and protected only if human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the ability of individuals to choose cultural expressions, were guaranteed. Media pluralism and freedom of assembly and of association were essential for the expression of cultural diversity.

41. According to the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, no one could invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, or to limit their scope. Moreover, it was the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic or cultural systems, to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all. Regrettably, the draft resolution included references to discriminatory treatment of cultures and religions, shifting the focus away from the individual as the rights holder, which was the fundamental principle for human rights. Furthermore, the references to universally accepted human rights could be misinterpreted to imply the existence of human rights that were not universal. The European Union member States would therefore vote against the draft resolution and requested that all delegations do likewise.

42. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.38.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco,

Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

None.

43. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.38 was adopted by 130 votes to 54.*

44. **Ms. Brooke** (United States of America) said that her Government continued to support the promotion of cultural pluralism, tolerance, cooperation and dialogue among individuals from different cultures and civilizations. All Governments were responsible for protecting the rights and freedoms set out in international human rights law. Under the Charter of the United Nations, the international community was committed to cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

45. Cultural diversity had played a critical role in the history of her own country, which demonstrated that cultural diversity could strengthen human rights. However, her delegation was concerned that the concept of cultural diversity as described in the draft resolution could be misused to legitimize human rights abuses. Human rights were universal and respect for them enhanced respect for diversity. Efforts to promote cultural diversity should not infringe on the enjoyment of human rights nor justify limitations on their scope. By raising the concept of cultural diversity to the level of an essential objective, while failing to reflect concerns about its possible misuse, the draft resolution misrepresented the relationship between cultural diversity and international human rights law. Cultural diversity and its relationship with human rights law was characterized in a more accurate and balanced way in Human Rights Council resolution 17/15, and her delegation had joined the consensus on that resolution in June 2011.

46. Furthermore, the United States did not agree that UNESCO should take up initiatives aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue on human rights or that the Secretary-General should prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution. For those and other reasons, her delegation had voted against the draft resolution.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.40/Rev.1: Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief*

47. The Chair said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

48. Mr. Essam (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that were members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, said that a number of revisions had been made to the text following informal negotiations, including the deletion of the eighteenth preambular paragraph bis, paragraph 3 and paragraph 8 (e). Introducing an oral revision, he said that the phrase "and welcoming further the offer of Chile to host the next meeting in 2016" should be deleted, as that offer had been withdrawn.

49. Mr. Khane (Secretary of the Committee) said that Australia, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Eritrea, Ghana, Lesotho, New Zealand and

Thailand had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution, as orally revised.

50. Mr. Maes (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union, said that the European Union viewed the resolution as a call to States to respond to acts of intolerance and discrimination with full respect for international human rights law. The international community must consolidate its collective response to counter those who sought to use religion as an instrument for sowing division, intolerance, extremism and violence. Any restrictions on freedom of expression, which was a key tool for combating religious discrimination, hatred and violence, could undermine efforts to combat intolerance and should be imposed with sensitivity and in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; such restrictions should not be a pretext for arbitrary or discriminatory limitations of fundamental rights.

51. States, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, religious entities and the media all had key roles to play in facilitating the interreligious or intercultural dialogue that was crucial for combating religious hatred and its manifestations. Cultural diversity or religious traditions must not, however, be invoked as grounds for curtailing human rights guaranteed under international law.

52. Religious hatred was primarily a threat at the local and national levels, and States were primarily responsible for protecting the rights and freedoms of members of religious minorities and communities. All persons should be able to enjoy their human right to practice their religion or belief, irrespective of whether they were members of a minority or a majority, and to worship freely, without fear of intolerance expressed through violent attacks. The European Union condemned attacks on religious sites as violations of international law.

53. The European Union would continue its efforts to combat all intolerance that infringed on the human rights of others. It was in the light of that understanding that the European Union joined the consensus on draft resolution.

54. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.40/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

*Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.41/Rev.1: Freedom of religion or belief*

55. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

56. **Mr. Maes** (Luxembourg), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the States members of the European Union and the other main sponsors, urged all States to step up their efforts to promote freedom of religion or belief, including by implementing related universal periodic review recommendations. The adoption of the draft resolution by consensus would send a strong collective message to the world that freedom of religion or belief was a fundamental right of all persons.

57. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey and Ukraine had joined the sponsors.

58. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.41/Rev.1 was adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.*